

## CLAIMS

1. A method of determining volume types present on a storage device, the method including the steps of determining superficial specifying characteristics of an unknown volume on the storage device and correlating these against one or more previously determined volume characteristics thereby inferring the volume type.
2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the storage device comprise one or more data storage units.
3. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the data storage unit corresponds to a disk or drive and/or is logical or physical.
4. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the storage device comprises a disk, array of disks or similar assembly of partitionable media.
5. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the specifying characteristics include identifying strings embedded in the symbolic names of each volume.
6. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the specifying characteristics further include characteristics related to how the volumes are physically arranged in the storage device.
7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the physical arrangement of the volumes on the storage device include criteria corresponding to the size of the storage unit extents of the volume in relation to the actual size of the volume.
8. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein RAID and striped volume types are identified by corresponding strings present in the symbolic volume name.

9. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein, if the volume is not previously identified as a RAID volume, the characteristic of the sum of the storage unit extents occupied by the volume being greater than the actual size of the volume corresponds to a mirrored volume type.

10. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the characteristic of the storage unit extents occupied by the volume being on the same storage unit corresponds to a simple volume type.

11. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein if the volume is not previously identified as a RAID volume, the characteristic of neither the sum of the storage unit extents occupied by the volume being greater than the actual size of the volume nor the storage unit extents occupied by the volume being on the same storage device, corresponds to a spanned volume type.

12. A method of determining the volume types present on a disk, the method including the steps of:

- determining if the symbolic name of the volume contains information identifying the volume type as either "raid" or "striped" thereby indicating that the volume type is "raid" or "striped" respectively;
- determining the size of all the storage unit extents occupied by the volume and the actual size of the volume;
- determining if the sum of the storage unit extents is greater than the actual size of the volume thereby indicating that the volume type is "mirrored";
- determining if all storage unit extents lie on the same storage unit thereby indicating that the volume type is "simple";
- and, determining if the all storage unit extents do not lie on the same storage unit and that the sum of the storage unit extents is not greater

than the actual size of the volume, thereby indicating that the volume type is "spanned".

13. A system for managing volumes on storage devices including:
  - memory which stores specifying characteristics corresponding to one or more volume types;
  - a processor arranged to determine characteristics of volumes occupying storage devices which are present on the system and correlate the determined characteristics against the specified characteristics thereby inferring the volume type.
14. A system as claimed in claim 13, wherein the inference step includes extracting the symbolic name of the volume and if it includes the string RAID or striped, correlating that with the RAID and striped volume types respectively, and otherwise analysing the size of the storage unit extents occupied by the volume and if the sum of the storage unit extents is more than the actual size of the volume correlating that with a mirrored volume type, if the storage unit extents occupied by the volume all reside on the same storage unit, correlating that with a simple volume type and if none of the abovementioned criteria are met, correlating this with a spanned volume type.
15. A computer adapted to operate in accordance with claim 1.
16. A module adapted to function in accordance with claim 1.